



MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Zoning Commission

FROM: Jennifer Steingasser, Deputy Director Development Review & Historic Preservation

DATE: March 17, 2014

SUBJECT: Case No. 06-42A: Request filed by Goulston & Storrs for campus plan amendment and a special exception for further processing and minor modification to construct the Trinity Academic Center at Trinity Washington University, 125 Michigan Avenue, NE (Square 3548, Lot2, Parcel 120/33 and Parcel 120/34).

I. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Planning recommends approval of the requested further processing of the approved 2006-2016 Campus Plan to include construction of the Trinity Academic Center with a reduction in size of the academic center from 180,000 sf. to 81,193 sf. OP also recommends approval of the minor modification to the circulation plan on condition that approval is granted by DDOT for the portion of the roadway and parking areas located within public space, as depicted in the site plan. If approval is denied by DDOT then the applicant would require a modification to the submitted site plan.

Further, any approval granted by the Commission would not imply a determination on the historic attributes of the existing science building, which is proposed for demolition by the applicant.

II. APPLICATION-IN-BRIEF

Applicant	Trinity Washington University (Trinity)
Location	The campus is bounded by Michigan Avenue to the west, 4 th Street and Lincoln Road to the east and southeast, Franklin Street to the south and the Oblate College to the north.
Zoning	R-5-A
Property Size	Approximately 1,171,600 sf (26.90 acres)
Proposal	A minor modification of Trinity University's approved 2006-2016 Campus Plan, and further processing to construct an academic center, as anticipated under the Plan, with revision of the current vehicular circulation on the campus. An 80,000 square-foot academic building is proposed to replace the Science building's older laboratory and instructional spaces. The science building will be demolished and the new center would house the nursing and science programs. The approved plan requires a minor modification to vary the approved size of the building from 180,000 sf. to 81,193 sf., permit the demolition of the Science building and incorporate a new circulation pattern on the campus.
Relief and Zoning	Special exception relief pursuant to 11 DCMR 3104 and § 210 for further processing and minor modifications to the university's 2006-2016 Campus Master Plan.

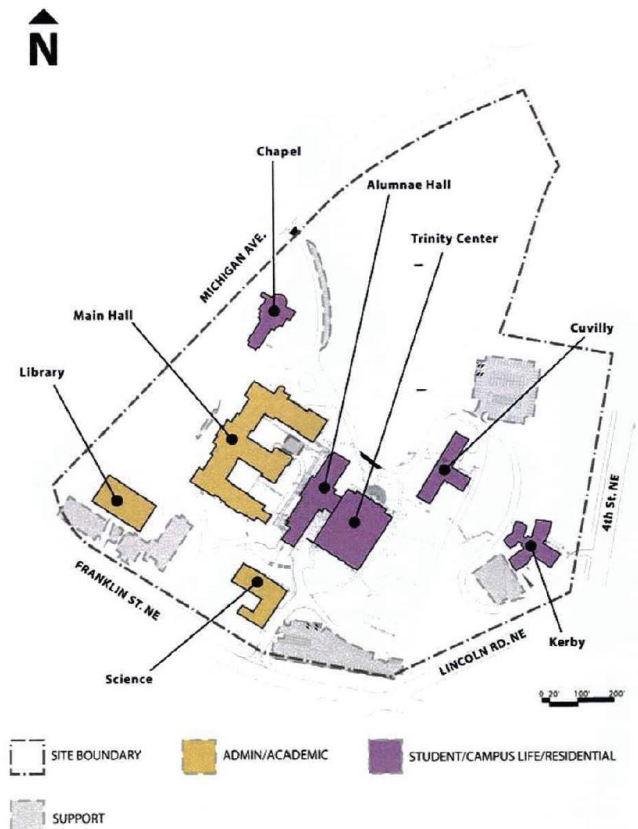
III. AREA and SITE DESCRIPTION

Land uses in the vicinity of the campus are predominantly institutional and residential in the R-5 districts. Uses adjacent to and within the same square as the proposed project include the Oblate College to the north of the campus and residential uses to the west (Cloisters and Park Place) across Michigan Avenue and south at Franklin Street. Surrounding educational and healthcare institutions within a one-mile radius of the site include: Catholic University, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops/US Catholic Conference Headquarters Building, the Washington Hospital Center, Children's Hospital, the Veteran's Administration Hospital, the National Rehabilitation Hospital and the US Soldiers and Airmen's Home. A 5 acre PUD site (08-33) is located at the corner of Michigan Avenue and Irving Street, NE. is improved with a parking lot, commonly known as the "fringe parking lot".



Zoning and Aerial View of Campus

Eight buildings comprise the 27-acre Trinity campus as illustrated on the right. Currently, the gross floor area is 573,997 square feet (0.49 FAR). The proposed Academic Building would be 81,193 square feet in gross floor area, which would increase the overall gfa to 613,130 sf. (0.52FAR).



IV. CAMPUS HISTORY

Trinity was established in 1897 and its first campus plan was approved by the BZA in 1966. Zoning Commission Order 06-42 approved the current plan, Trinity Washington University Master Plan, 2006-2016, which became effective on July 20, 2007 for a period of 10 years. The subject application is the first further processing application and minor modification to that plan. The table provides a brief history of the campus plan development to date:

BZA /ZC Order (Year)	Proposal	Gross Floor Area (sf)	FAR	Parking Spaces	Faculty	Students
(1966)	First approval of Trinity College master Plan by BZA			526	No info	500
16145 (1996)	Amendment to and further processing of approved plan to construct Alumnae Hall for a campus center and a child development center. Approval for a period of 10 years (to Sept. 2006)	615,710	0.53	526	223 250 (approved)	1,405 2,100 (approved)
ZC Order 937 (Case # 00-37/16645) (2001)	Special exception for further processing for the construction of Trinity Center; reconfiguration and expansion of 2 parking lots to provide 70 more spaces.	615,710	0.49	400 of required 526 spaces to be provided on campus grounds.	223	2,100 (approved)
ZC Order 06-42 (2007)	Approval for 10 yrs. Until 2017	615,710 573,997 (exist.)	0.72 0.49 (exist.)	376 (approved) 430 (existing)	220 (FT) 250 (PT)	1650 (exist) 3,000 (approved)
06-42A (2014)	Campus Plan amendment and Further Processing for the construction of Trinity Academic Center and revised circulation plan	613,130	0.52	430 (existing) 424 (proposed)	220 (FT) 250 (PT)	2,500 (current)

V. ISSUES

Historic Preservation

The Trinity University campus has buildings constructed prior to 1930 and some structures were deemed eligible historic landmarks. As part of Condition #10 of the existing Order 06-42, the Commission required Trinity to prepare and submit a report on the buildings aged 50 years or older. Five buildings met the criteria, including:

- The Main Hall (1900)
- Notre Dame Chapel (1924)
- Alumnae Hall (1929)
- Science Building (1942) and
- Cuvilly Hall (1958)

The applicant is in consultation with the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) regarding the historic attributes of the buildings, including the science building, in order to provide Trinity with its written determination. If staff determines that the Science building meets the eligibility criteria, the applicant is required to use that determination in planning for this development, consult with HPO staff and likely return to the Commission with a revised proposal.

District Department of Transportation

The proposed site plan (C 01 03B) shows the proposed roadway to the library's parking lot, as well as a few parking spaces for the library, located in public space. This is an exceptional situation on this property, as a retaining wall and the university's property line bound an area of public space, which has been historically used

by the University. The applicant is currently working with DDOT to resolve these access and public space issues as DDOT has determined this is an unpermitted use of public space.

VI. EXISTING ZONING

The subject property is located within the R-5-A (low density general residence) District and the Mixed- Use Diplomatic Overlay District. All uses, buildings and structures permitted within the R-5-A District are also permitted within the Mixed Use Diplomatic Overlay District.

R- 5-A District

“The R-5 Districts are General Residence Districts designed to permit flexibility of design by permitting in a single district, except as provided in §§ 350 through 361, all types of urban residential development if they conform to the height, density, and area requirements.... The R-5 Districts shall also permit the construction of those institutional and semi-public buildings that would be compatible with adjoining residential uses and that are excluded from the more restrictive Residence Districts.” (§ 350.1)

Mixed Use Diplomatic Overlay District

“The Mixed Use Diplomatic (D) Overlay District is established to implement the Foreign Missions Act, approved August 24, 1982...” (§ 1000.1)

VII. SECTION 210 REVIEW

The application is in conformance with the criteria contained within § 210, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, as described below.

210.1 *Use as a college or university that is an academic institution of higher learning, including a college or university hospital, dormitory, fraternity, or sorority house proposed to be located on the campus of a college or university, shall be permitted as a special exception in an R-1 District if approved by the Zoning Commission under § 3104, subject to the provisions of this section.*

This application is for the further processing of previously approved development proposals of the subject property as an academic institution of higher learning.

210.2 *Use as a college or university shall be located so that it is not likely to become objectionable to neighboring property because of noise, traffic, number of students, or other objectionable conditions.*

Noise

The campus does not directly abut any residential properties. The only property that it does directly abut is the Oblate College to the north, a similar type institution. To the east, across 4th Street, is Saint Paul’s College. To the west, across Michigan Avenue and to the south, across Franklin Street, are residential developments that face into their properties, and not the abutting street. The sports facilities are centrally located on campus and the campus contains large tracts of open space that surround most of the buildings and on-campus uses. The proposed academic center would not be a source of excessive noise. Its location does not abut any residential properties. The new building would replace the existing science building, which housed classrooms and labs, similar to that proposed within the new academic center.

Students and Staff

In 2006, the campus plan proposed an increase in enrollment from its existing 1,650 students to 3,000 students, including 600 full time students. At that time 40% of the student population represented graduate students. The plan anticipated that the majority of the students were expected to be evening and weekend students, and not all 3,000 are expected to be there at the same time. In addition, approximately 100 students were expected to be enrolled in courses in Southeast DC and it was anticipated that 300 to 500 would have enrolled on-line.

Currently, the university has approximately 2,500 students, with 85 enrolled at THEARC in southeast DC, 220 full-time faculty and staff and 250 part-time faculty. The university projects to reach its 3,000 student count with the opening of the new academic center. It does not anticipate a need for additional faculty or staff at this time.

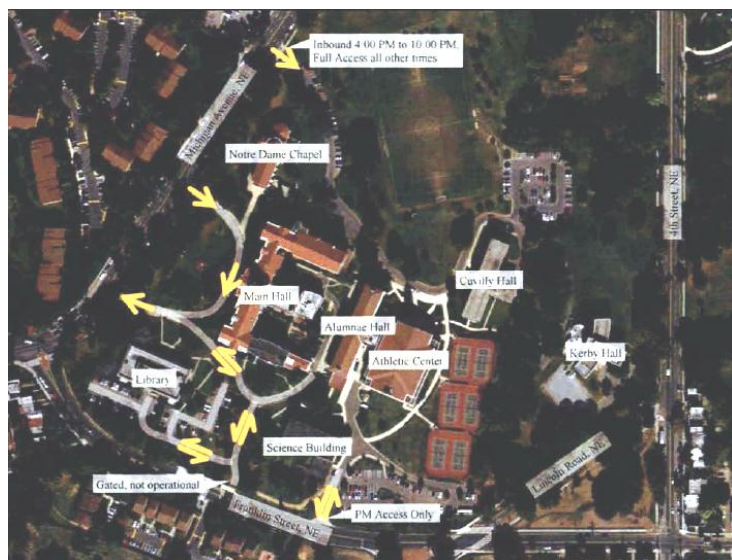
Housing

While the amount of student housing on campus is adequate to meet the current needs of the university, the existing residential buildings are outdated. The university plan intends to seek partnership ventures with for-profit entities to develop new student housing on campus with a potential mix of market rate units and/or retail uses. This aspect would be further developed in future applications.

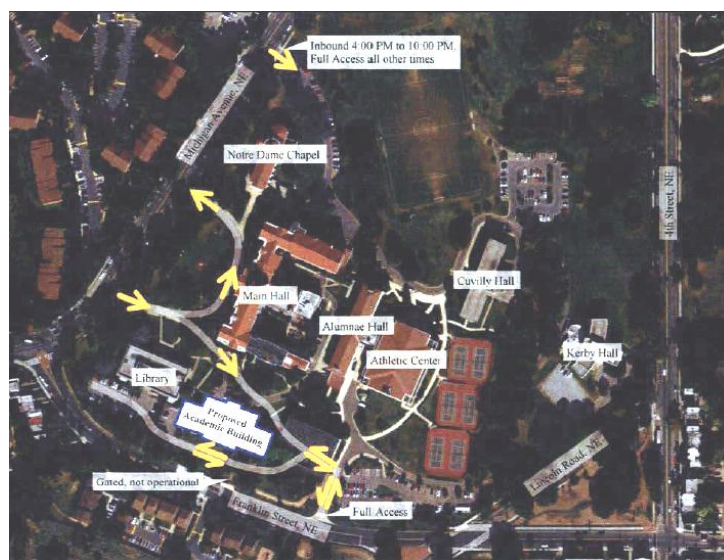
Traffic

The center will house existing programs, so no additional traffic is anticipated to be generated by the new building. The applicant's submission contains a transportation assessment, which was presented to DDOT for review. The plan includes the campus's access and circulation with proposed changes, the transportation options in and around campus and a parking evaluation. Proposed changes in the access and circulation on campus are summarized as follows:

- Circulation in front of Main Hall is shown reversed –from clockwise to counter clockwise;
- Access between Main Hall, the library and the proposed academic center would be one-way southbound;
- All day use and two way traffic is included at the Franklin Street access; and
- A new roadway segment is proposed south of the new academic center to provide ingress and egress to the library's parking lot.



Existing Circulation



Proposed Circulation

DDOT expressed concerns regarding the change in the circulation pattern and requested the applicant provide a traffic survey which is expected to be reviewed by DDOT prior to the public hearing. DDOT also requested the applicant to provide a sidewalk along Franklin Street for pedestrian use. As mentioned, the applicant will review with DDOT their concerns regarding the use of public space for the proposed circulation plan. DDOT's report is submitted under separate cover.

Transportation

The Brookland Metro Station is located within a mile of the campus and the university provides a free shuttle to that station daily. During construction the campus shuttle service would be expanded to include the parking lot at Kerby Hall to encourage drivers to park at this underutilized lot during construction (Figure 6 of Transportation Analysis). There are several bus routes, with stops along Franklin Street to the south and Michigan Avenue to the west. The new sidewalk to be built along the new roadway would connect with the existing network to facilitate pedestrian movement within the campus. Bicycle parking would be installed outside the new center but the number of bike racks was not provided in the application. Upon completion of construction, six parking spaces would be lost, reducing the existing supply (430 spaces) to 424 spaces, which is well above the number under the approved campus plan (376 spaces).

Tree Retention and GAR

The applicant has provided the green area ratio for the overall site (0.43) which satisfies the zone requirements. A planting plan has been provided (L201A – L 401) with the plans.

210.3 In R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5-A, and R-5-B Districts, the maximum bulk requirements normally applicable in the Districts may be increased for specific buildings or structures; provided, that the total bulk of all buildings and structures on the campus shall not exceed the gross floor area prescribed for the R-5-B District. In all other Residence Districts, similar bulk increases may also be permitted; provided that the total bulk of all buildings and structures on the campus shall not exceed the gross floor area prescribed for the R-5-D District. Because of permissive increases as applicable to normal bulk requirements in the low-density districts regulated by this title, it is the intent of this subsection to prevent unreasonable campus expansion into improved low-density districts.”

The gross floor area within the R-5-A District is permitted up to a maximum ratio of 1.8. The subject application proposes an overall floor area ratio of 0.52, well below the permitted maximum and is a reduction in the previously approved 0.72 FAR, due to smaller footprint for the academic center, than previously noted in the approved campus plan.

210.4 As a prerequisite to requesting a special exception for each college or university use, the applicant shall have submitted to the Commission for its approval a plan for developing the campus as a whole, showing the location, height, and bulk, where appropriate, of all present and proposed improvements, including but not limited to the following:

- (a) Buildings and parking and loading facilities;*
- (b) Screening, signs, streets, and public utility facilities;*
- (c) Athletic and other recreational facilities; and*
- (d) A description of all activities conducted or to be conducted on the campus, and of the capacity of all present and proposed campus development.”*

The existing 2006-2016 Master Plan describes all existing buildings, and those that are proposed as a part of the campus. This submission represents the further processing and minor modification of that plan. The application is in conformance with this provision.

210.5 Within a reasonable distance of the college or university campus, and subject to compliance with § 210.2, the Commission may also permit the interim use of land or improved property with any use that the Commission may determine is a proper college or university function.

The subject application does not propose any off-campus interim use of land or improved property.

210.6 When a major new building that has been proposed in a campus plan is instead moved off-campus, the previously designated site shall not be designated for, or devoted to, a different major new building unless the

Commission has approved an amendment to the campus plan applicable to the site; provided, that for this purpose a major new building is defined as one specifically identified in the campus plan.”

The subject application does not propose to move off-campus any major new building that had been proposed in a campus plan.

210.7 *In reviewing and deciding a campus plan application or new building construction pursuant to a campus plan, the Commission shall consider, to the extent they are relevant, the policies of the District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan.*

The Comprehensive Plan’s recommendations are provided separately under Section VIII of this report.

210.8 *As an integral part of the application requesting approval of new building construction pursuant to a campus plan, the college or university shall certify and document that the proposed building or amendment is within the floor area ratio (FAR) limit for the campus as a whole, based upon the computation included in the most recently approved campus plan and the FARs of any other buildings constructed or demolished since the campus plan was approved.*

The proposed academic building would be 81,193 square feet, significantly less than the 180,000 square foot building anticipated under the approved 2006-2016 Plan, resulting in an overall 0.52 FAR, which is less than the approved 0.72 FAR.

Other Objectionable Conditions

OP has no information that the existing campus operations present objectionable conditions to the surrounding neighborhood. The applicant has worked with the community and maintains a relationship with the community members through the ANC to ensure that any neighborhood issues are addressed.

VIII. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Approval of the proposed further processing to construct the proposed academic center would not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan’s Upper Northeast Area Element’s policies, as well as with policies of the Land Use, Environmental Protection and Education Citywide Plan elements

Policy LU-2.3.5: Institutional Uses: *Recognize the importance of institutional uses, such as private schools, child care facilities, and similar uses, to the economy, character, history, and future of the District of Columbia. Ensure that when such uses are permitted in residential neighborhoods, they are designed and operated in a manner that is sensitive to neighborhood issues and that maintains quality of life. Encourage institutions and neighborhoods to work proactively to address issues such as traffic and parking, hours of operation, outside use of facilities, and facility expansion.*

Policy LU-3.2.1: Transportation Impacts of Institutional Uses: *Support ongoing efforts by District institutions to mitigate their traffic and parking impacts by promoting ridesharing, carpooling, public transportation, shuttle service and bicycling; providing on-site parking; and undertaking other transportation demand management measures.*

Policy LU-3.2.3: Non-Profits, Private Schools, and Service Organizations: *Ensure that large non-profits, service organizations, private schools, seminaries, colleges and universities, and other institutional uses that occupy large sites within residential areas are planned, designed, and managed in a way that minimizes objectionable impacts on adjacent communities. The zoning regulations should ensure that the expansion of these uses is not permitted if the quality of life in adjacent residential areas is significantly adversely affected.*

Policy EDU-3.3.2: Balancing University Growth and Neighborhood Needs: *Encourage the growth and development of local colleges and universities in a manner that recognizes the role these institutions play in contributing to the District's character, culture, economy and is also consistent with and supports community improvement and neighborhood conservation objectives. Discourage university actions that would adversely affect the character or quality of life in surrounding residential areas.*

Policy EDU-3.3.3: Campus Plan Requirements: *Continue to require campus plans for colleges and universities located in residential and mixed use zone districts. These plans should be prepared by the institutions themselves, subject to District review and approval, and should address issues raised by the surrounding communities. Each campus plan should include provisions that ensure that the institution is not likely to become objectionable to neighboring property because of noise, traffic, number of students, or other similar conditions.*

Policy EDU-3.3.5: Transportation Impacts of Colleges and Universities: *Support ongoing efforts by colleges and universities to mitigate their traffic and parking impacts by promoting ridesharing, carpooling, shuttle service, bicycling, and other transportation demand management measures. The provision of adequate on-site parking for institutional uses also should be encouraged.*

The university use and campus plan would further the policies cited above. The campus is developed with large setbacks from the residential areas to the north, south and east. These setbacks are proposed to remain, protecting the residential areas. The new academic center proposed would not abut the residential areas and should not become a nuisance to the surrounding residents. There have been no concerns expressed to date regarding the current operations of the university, regarding traffic or on-street parking, as the majority of the required parking is provided on the campus. The university encourages alternative modes of transportation to the university through the provision of a shuttle service to the Brookland Metro Station and Metrochek to its employees. Additional bicycle racks would be installed on campus upon completion of the new academic building.

IX. AGENCY COMMENTS

DDOT expressed concerns to OP and the applicant about the revised circulation plans, including the:

- change in ingress and egress pattern via Michigan Avenue;
- revised access times at the Franklin Street entrance; and
- access to the library's parking lot, a portion of which is located in public space.

The applicant informed OP that a traffic survey would be submitted for DDOT's determination on whether the revised circulation pattern on the campus would present adverse impacts on the levels of service along Michigan Avenue and Franklin Street. DDOT has determined that the proposed site plan including the roadway represents the unauthorized use of public space. OP supports DDOT's concerns regarding this issue and the applicant is working with DDOT to resolve their concerns. DDOT's full report would be presented under separate cover.

The applicant is in consultation with Historic Preservation staff regarding the eligibility of the campus buildings as landmarks.

OP is not aware of other agencies' concerns or comments on the application.

X. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

At its meeting on November 19, 2013, the ANC5E voted unanimously to support approval of the special exception request for further processing of the campus plan. The ANC's report was submitted under separate cover.